

Appendix E

Off-Highway Vehicles and Wildlife Workshop ~~~~~

Off-highway Vehicles (OHV) and Wildlife Workshop State Parks' OHV Stakeholders Roundtable, March 24, 2005 Workshop Notes

OHV workshop comments may be summarized under six topics:

1. Background
2. Provide quality OHV opportunities
3. Educate and communicate with OHV community
4. OHV rider/driver certification
5. Enforcement of the rules
6. Major points

1. Background

- Rapid growth of OHV activity, economy, of all types.
- Double-digit sales growth nationwide, but fewer off-road opportunities.
- No new OHV parks in California in 25 years.
- Not certain wildlife agencies have data showing impacts on wildlife.
- OHV Commission has diverted funds from enforcement and stewardship of facilities to restoration.

2. Provide quality opportunity for growing demand

- Need to spend more funds on maintaining and rehabilitating OHV facilities.
- If OHV areas are maintained, people will take care of them. If they are a mess, people abuse them.
- Provide quality opportunity, what the OHV enthusiast is looking for.
- Need to include analysis of economics of OHV—takes money to provide opportunity.
- Prevention approach: to prevent illegal OHV activity and damage to natural resources, more should be invested in good facilities and enforcement rather than restoration.

3. Education and communication

- Give reason (e.g., wildlife conservation) to appreciate and protect or value the resource.
- People must understand and accept the logic of the restrictions or law.
- Must educate youth and adults.
- Need to educate kids on the wise use of OHVs.
- Check education Web site: N2DIRT.
- Threaten closures to get OHV community attention.
- Create incentives to care and partner with agencies.
- Communicate with OHV public about how public can help and how to implement programs.
- Provide the information to the public to distribute and learn from.

Education venues and outreach:

- Meetings between agencies and recreationists.
- On-the-ground canvass effort—distribute materials everywhere an enthusiast might be.
- OHV facility parking lots are very good places to educate people; that is where you can contact most riders.
- Education materials should be in hands of all agencies on the ground to hand out.
- Public Service Announcements—(youth and adult versions) all media outlets.
- Provide rewards for helping to educate (pins, etc.); big with kids, and they will share the info with parents.
- Provide school curriculum for kids under age 10.
- Billboards are good.
- Web site
- Maps
- Need signs at specific areas of concern.

- Need more and better interpretive info.
- Rules and regulations need to be clearly communicated to public.
- Dealers need to actively provide education info.

Education Meetings

- Advantage: face-to-face.
- Disadvantage: Groups generally not the people who are causing the problem and need the message.

Education through schools and with kids

- Advantage: Once changed, it is holistic
- Disadvantage: Takes time and resources.

4. Need rider certification of some kind

- Need certification on driver license, or certification for youth. Must learn rules to be certified.
- Need mandatory rule card similar to a fishing license.
- Need OHV certificate for young riders. Need booklet and test.

5. Enforcement

- Commission reducing funding for OHV enforcement.
- Agencies—meet responsibility for enforcement, management, and education.
- Provide patrol and closure signs.
- Some State Parks enforcement officers are excellent. (Example: rangers at Hollister.)
- Make violation consequences severe.
- Enforcement should track violations, so rider gets a couple of warnings then a stiff penalty. (Currently no way to track rider violations.)
- Word-of-mouth of penalty shapes behavior.
- It is more effective to tell what is right than wrong. Positive approaches more effective than negative.
- Most people want to do the right thing; peer pressure to do the right thing is great.

6. Major Points

- Need to increase quality opportunity.
- Need enforcement and fines.
- Consider OHV certification.

- Need good education effort through many venues.

Roundtable Participants

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